United Nations A/64/PV.71

General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

71st plenary meeting
Tuesday, 23 February 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Agenda item 136 ***(continued)***

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/64/631/Add.1, A/64/631/Add.2 and A/64/631/Add.3)

The Acting President: In keeping with the established practice, I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to documents A/64/631/Add.1 to Add.3, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/64/631, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Swaziland and Timor-Leste have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in those documents?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 49 ***(continued)***

Culture of peace

Draft resolution (A/64/L.30/Rev.2)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on this agenda item at its 41st and 42nd plenary meetings, on 9 and 10 November 2009. Members will also recall that the Assembly took action on draft resolutions A/64/L.13 and A/64/L.14 under the same agenda item at the 42nd plenary meeting, on 10 November 2009, and draft resolutions A/64/L.5 and A/64/L.15/Rev.1 at the 60th plenary meeting, on 7 December 2009.

I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): On behalf of the main sponsors — Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan — I would like to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2, entitled "International Day of Nowruz".

For over 3,000 years, Nowruz has been celebrated on 21 March as the beginning of the new year by over 300 million people around the world, including in the Balkans, the Black Sea basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions. As the embodiment of the unity of cultural heritage and centuries-long traditions, Nowruz plays a significant role in strengthening ties among peoples on the basis of mutual respect and the ideals of peace and good-neighbourliness. It also reflects features of cultural and ancient customs and is centred on the affirmation of life in harmony with nature. All civilizations celebrate the unity and diversity of humankind, which are enriched and evolve through

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dialogue with others. Throughout history, there has been interaction among various civilizations.

Nowruz also contributes to the enrichment of humankind, which is fully in compliance with the objectives of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). In that Document, heads of State and Government acknowledged the importance of respect for cultural diversity throughout the world and the need for dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples. In facilitating the process of mutual cultural enrichment and in promoting civilizational exchanges, Nowruz develops international cooperation and strengthens the cultural identity of interested States. At the same time, Nowruz promotes the culture of peace and solidarity between generations and within families, thus contributing to cultural diversity and friendship among peoples and various communities.

Cultural diversity and tolerance, a healthy lifestyle and the renewal of the living environment are promoted and transmitted from generation to generation during this cultural event. One of the main objectives of Nowruz is to encourage a transformation of behavioural attitudes towards sustainability. That is reflected in activities focused on the preservation of nature, including the planting of trees, respecting water resources and cleaning houses.

Nowruz is a celebration that consists of various ceremonies, rituals, cultural events and customs, including traditional games, culinary traditions, music and dance. It forms a fundamental part of the cultural identity of the communities concerned. From antiquity, Nowruz has embraced a variety of different features of intangible cultural heritage, with a very vast geographical scope.

Women play an important and major role in cultural events at Nowruz by managing ceremonies and disseminating traditional knowledge to youth.

Nowruz encourages intercultural dialogue and understanding and reciprocal knowledge for the purpose of peace and reconciliation. As different people celebrate it in different ways, Nowruz promotes the manifestation of a peaceful and unifying form of cultural diversity. It also contributes to the dissemination of the values of social justice and solidarity, equality and equity, and charity and poverty alleviation.

In order to further encourage intercultural and intracultural dialogue and mutual respect among cultures, while at the same time strengthening their transmission to future generations, Nowruz was included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 30 September 2009.

As part of the common heritage that belongs to all humankind, all cultures have values that must be respected and preserved. We attach particular importance to international cultural cooperation for the development of peaceful relations and friendship among peoples and to promoting better understanding of each other's way of life. We believe that this cooperation will promote the enrichment of all cultures and contribute to the establishment of stable and long-term relations between peoples.

Azerbaijan believes that Nowruz deserves to be recognized as an international day by the General Assembly. That is why we initiated this draft resolution. Together with the main sponsors, we now call upon all Member States to support the draft resolution as an expression of solidarity and a recognition of efforts aimed at preserving and developing cultures and traditions that have existed for more than 3,000 years.

The text of the draft resolution was extensively discussed and negotiated with Member States in an open and transparent manner. We look forward to its adoption by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2, entitled "International Day of Nowruz".

I would like to announce that, since its publication, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2: Albania, India and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2?

Draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2 was adopted (resolution 64/253).

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who wishes to make a statement following the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Al Habib (Islamic Republic of Iran): After such a harsh and cold winter, let me talk about our longing for a joyous spring. Let me talk about Nowruz, the new day, the festival of revival and rebirth on our planet and in our souls.

In the words of Jalaluddin Rumi, the great Persian poet,

> "Nowruz has arrived and the beloved's message has come. We are drunk with love and intoxicated and cannot be still. You may say that it is resurrection that has raised from the Earth the heads of those who rotted in December and January, the dead of yesterday. After all, the trees of the spirit will become even so, the tree of excellent boughs and the fortunate will be manifest".

I would like to express my gratitude for the unanimous support of all Member States for resolution 64/253.

Nowruz marks the first day of the Persian New Year. In harmony with the rebirth of nature, Nowruz is celebrated on 21 March, the very first day of spring each year. But Nowruz, with all its customs and rites, is much more than a date marked on our calendars. It conveys a deeply rooted culture that brings hope, peace and prosperity to millions of people around the world, regardless of their ethnicity or political and religious views.

From the time that Nowruz was established in the land of Persia and thereafter, throughout all the long centuries that Persia has been a melting pot for civilizations and ethnicities and until today, Nowruz has served as the common language for millions of people all around the world, including for over 3,000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East and many other regions. It is representative of the intangible cultural heritage of humankind, as recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in September 2009.

Nowruz plays a significant role in strengthening ties among peoples on the basis of mutual respect and the ideals of peace and good-neighbourliness. The traditions and rituals of Nowruz reflect the ancient cultural customs of the civilizations of East and West alike, influencing those civilizations through the interchange of human values. To commemorate Nowruz means to respect the origins, history, values and legacy of magnificent civilizations.

In conclusion, to commemorate Nowruz also means to promote life in harmony with nature, natural cycles and sources of life. In that regard, this resolution complements resolution 63/278, entitled "International Mother Earth Day", which the General Assembly adopted on 22 April 2009.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 49.

Agenda item 52 ***(continued)***

Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference

Draft decision (A/64/L.47)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/64/L.47, entitled "Fourth High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision A/64/L.47?

Draft decision A/64/L.47 was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 52.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I wish to inform members that the consideration of sub-item (j) of agenda item 112, "Appointment of three ad litem judges of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal", which was scheduled for today, has been postponed to a later date to be announced.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.